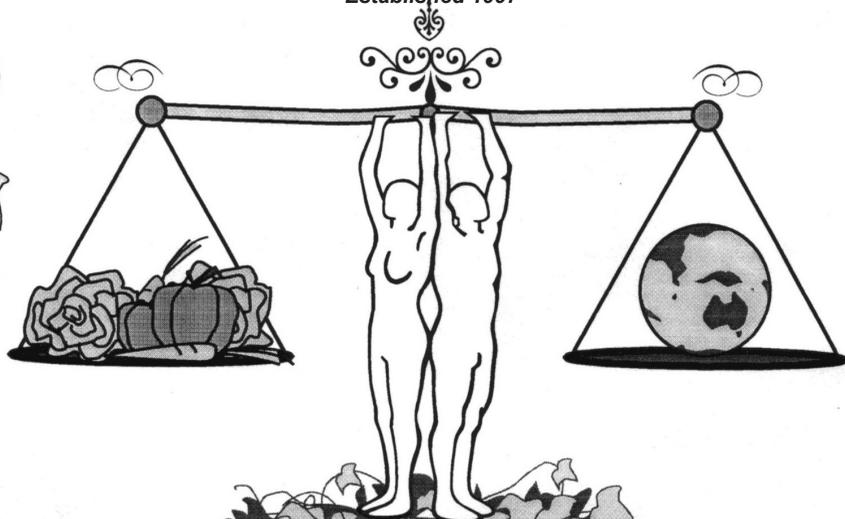


# GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.

Established 1997



## NEWSLETTER

Volume 25, 2021 Issue 1  
GARDENING IN AUTUMN

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OUR NEXT MEETING: FEBRUARY 25, 2021

## Notice Board

1. **To promote organic sustainable food raising for home gardens and farms.**
2. **To foster research into improved methods of organic farming and gardening.**
3. **To provide information and support to all those interested in the various aspects of organic growing.**

### Meetings Held:

The fourth Thursday of the month at the Elanora Community Centre, 26 Galleon Way, Elanora.

### Annual Membership Fees:

Single: \$20. Family: \$30.

To renew or start memberships please transfer funds directly into our bank account, send cheques (payable to GCOG) to PO Box 210, Mudgeeraba Qld 4213, or just pay at the door.

**Name: Gold Coast Organic Growers**  
**Bank: Suncorp**  
**BSB: 484-799**  
**Account: 0014-21651**

### Seed Bank:

Packets are \$2.00 each.

### Members' Market Corner:

Please bring plants, books and produce you wish to sell or trade.

### Raffle Table:

This relies on the kind generosity of members to donate items on the night. Tickets - \$1 each or 3 for \$2.

### Library:

Books 50c, Videos, DVDs \$2, Soil Test Kit \$2. Available to members for 1 month.

### Advertising: (Note 11 issues/year)

**1/4 page:** \$15 an issue, or \$145 per year,  
**1/2 page:** \$25 an issue, or \$250 per year,  
**full page:** \$40 an issue, or \$400 per year,

**W: [www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org](http://www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org)**  
**Facebook: [www.facebook.com/gcorganic](http://www.facebook.com/gcorganic)**

## 2020–2021 Committee

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Librarians	Evelyn Douglas Sally Beitz
Seed Bank Seed Assistants	Lyn Mansfield Maggie Golightly Bill Smart
Supper Co-ordinator	Paul Roberson Deb Phillips Dianne Casey

**Newsletter Contributions are welcome.** Send in a photo of what's going on in your patch or write an article about something interesting you've learnt recently. **The deadline for our Winter 2021 issue is the end of April.** Send articles and photos to Leah at *leahbryan9@gmail.com*

## Notice Board

### Membership Renewals

Pay online:

Name: Gold Coast Organic Growers  
 Bank: Suncorp  
 BSB: 484-799  
 Account: 0014-21651

**Remember to put your Name and Membership Number (the number in brackets after your name) in the comment field.**

### Membership Renewals

#### Overdue (as of January 31):

Barry O'Rourke (185), Angela Anderson (323), Christine Yeomans (433), Ashley Corpaci (448), Michele Miller (449), Sue Beckinsale (373), Nancy Hageman (388), Elizabeth Hughes (389), Celia Forrest (431), Carmen Martin (432), Fiona Ennis (450), John Trama (437), Justin & Jerry Rogers (275), Justin & Jerry Rogers (275), Bev Carlson (87), Dayne Petersen (377), Neil Ross (294), Karen Collins (457), Glenn & Joan Jones (266), Ann Brown (329), Rodney & Cathy Boscoe (347), Megan Keeler (358), Peter Turnermann (444), Anna Marie MacDonald (454), Anne-Maree Andrew (337)

#### February:

Henry Blonner (108), Roger & Pauline Behrendorff (232), Kerry Lason (402), Terry Lewins (427), Jane McLennan (446), Wendy Davies (463), Mark & Anita Fowler (464)

### Newsletter:

GCOG members are welcome to contribute photos and articles to our newsletter. Please send any contributions to Leah via the email leahbryan9@gmail.com

Contribution deadlines are:

Autumn issue: end of January

Winter issue: end of April

Spring issue: end of July

Summer issue: end of October

## Upcoming Guest Speakers

Our meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month at the Elanora Community Centre, 26 Galleon Way, Elanora.

Thursday February 25 - AGM, extended Q&A, garlic growing tips and members speaking

Thursday March 25 - John Palmer and KairosL "Regenerative Living Journeys"

## Workshops

EdibleScapes Gardens welcomes visitors and volunteers. Gardening activities occur on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 6.30am to mid-morning.

EdibleScapes International Women's Weed gardening celebration on Saturday March 13.

<https://www.ediblescapes.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/n.ediblescapes>

### Gardening Lunch – all welcome

We meet monthly for lunch and have a chat. 11 am to 2 pm – at a trendy café somewhere (any recommendation welcomed)

If you would like to know when the next lunch is on email Lyn Mansfield

[Lynmansfield14@bigpond.com](mailto:Lynmansfield14@bigpond.com)

Mobile – 0409 645 888

Want to share your event with our members?

Email it to leahbryan9@gmail.com

Whilst every effort is made to publish accurate information the association (including Editor, Executive Officers and Committee) accepts no responsibility for statements made or opinions expressed in this newsletter.

**View our Newsletters On-Line at:**

[www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org.au/](http://www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org.au/)

**Thanks to this issue's contributors:**

Jorge Cantellano Leah Johnston, Diane Kelly and Maria Roberson.

## President's Notes

By Maria Roberson

Hello Everyone,

I hope you that you have gotten used to the change of date and venue for our monthly meetings by now and have managed to come along. The hall can now hold up to 75 people which is great as that means we no longer have to apply an RSVP system - you can just show up. The committee has been very conscious of the change in, shall we say, "vibe" that recent COVID-19 restrictions have had on our meetings and though some things like our shared supper have had to be put on hold for the moment, we have managed to continue with many other fun activities. We still have the Swap Table where you can bring in veggies, fruit, eggs and all sorts of things to either swap or take from. If you have nothing to swap this month that's ok, take this time and perhaps next month you will have something to contribute. The For Sale Table is always stacked with jars of honey, seedlings and all sorts of garden related things. The Raffle table is as popular as ever and usually has so many prizes on it that it's a rare night indeed if you go home empty handed. Don't forget to contribute a little something to the Raffle Table every now and then, even a few lemons or a choko will make someone's night .

I wonder, if like me, you have put the veggie patch to sleep during Summer and have used your energies elsewhere in the garden or yard? I find that the rain has really boosted our fruit trees and paddocks which is a welcome relief after such a dry Spring but has had us doing an extreme amount of slashing and mulching for weed control.

The soil should have a good reservoir of moisture for Autumn and I think it will be an excellent growing season ahead. I am tipping it will be one of the best growing opportunities in a few years. Now is a good time to start planning and compiling a seed and plant list. Each year I have a crack at growing something new or attempt to perfect growing a

particular crop that hasn't worked out in the past. This season I am going to work on planting just enough of everything we like to eat and not too much of it, so that there is a continuous amount but no gluts. This time last year I "panic planted" for the impending apocalypse and now I may never be able to look a kale plant in the face again.

The Seed Table will be restocked with all your autumn/winter needs at the March meeting, so bring your list. I would like to thank you for your patience during the last few months as the seed inventory has been very low due to our seed suppliers being sold out of much of the stock we wanted during the last year. You may have noticed that there was still plenty of seed donated by our members on hand though, which is fabulous and we encourage you to keep honing your seed saving skills as it is a precious thing indeed.

Happy growing,  
Maria

## November Meeting Recap

By Leah Johnston

Members were struggling with cabbage moths attacking their plants.

Maria said not to waste time with the white butterfly decoys throughout the garden as they don't discourage them here in the sub tropics, and, as we no longer have a cold winter here to snap freeze them, there is no break in their breeding cycle.

"These insects have an instinct and have evolved, and are not fooled by a white plastic butterfly in your garden. It might work in Tasmania, where it's cold for eight months of the year and they are dead already. We don't want to do toxic things, but you need to sift through the natural information you find online as most of it is from cooler areas that work for them. You need to look for information from people with a climate like ours or hotter," she said.

Maria said as gardeners we spend a lot of time wasting our time.

“Follow a planting guide for this region. Don't follow one online unless it's ours or Brisbane Organic Growers. If you plant a cabbage in spring, you'll have nothing but white cabbage moths decimate them. You need to plant them in autumn and harvest in winter.

If you need to resort to anything, you can use Dipel, which is a naturally occurring gut rot.

Penny told us about how she got her feijoas to finally fruit. She Googled and found that a soft paint brush was recommended for spreading the pollen from flower to flower. She did this and has seen one little fruit developing already, which is a 100 per cent improvement on last year.

Margaret said you need two different varieties of feijoas to cross pollinate.

Mel said the flowers are completely edible and many people say they taste better than the fruits.

We had questions about keeping fruit flies away from guavas. Paul said to chop the tree down and burn it! Maria said to net them.

In the EcoVillage, Bill is putting fruit fly lures to attract the males and is spraying weekly to kill the females.

Maria said all the dropped fruit needs to be collected, killed in a hot bag, then binned. She said it's too time-intensive for her to bother with growing guavas.

Janet is happy to have peaches after weighting her fruit tree branches so that they grow laterally and fruit better.

Mel asked when to net them. Maria said let the flowers come out and pollinate them, then when they are the size of your little finger nail, or 70 per cent of the ripe fruit size, you net them. You can't get 100 per cent. It's a thing that you'll have to work out and you'll get better at it as you go.

Meghan puts hessian sacks under her fruit

trees so it's easy to see the fruit and collect it, without risking it rotting on the ground.

Bev asked about the Power Planter hole digging tool, and Stacey said it is quick and easy, but it does kick back when it hits a rock.

## November Guest Speaker Recap

Our speaker was Colin Johnson from [Earth-Life](#).

Colin's interest in soil health started at a young age growing up in Ipswich when he would wonder why the soil where the toilets were emptied was full of earth worms, but the soil in the fields where the crops were grown was lifeless. The farmers would scrape the top layer off the soil before planting the crops at that time.

When studying horticulture, he would ask how there can be a nitrogen deficiency in the plant when the air it is growing in is 70 per cent nitrogen? We were taught that you can't grow crops without fertilisers, but no one fertilises the rainforest in Springbrook and it's full of life.

“When the soil is functioning properly it looks after itself,” he said.

Colin recommended we watch the documentary 'Kiss The Ground' on Netflix (we've been recommended to watch this from other speakers and members, so if you have Netflix check it out). The documentary shows how tilling soil releases the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) it has stored. When the crops start growing they draw the CO<sub>2</sub> back down again. It is like the Earth's way of breathing in and out.

Colin explained how plants become dependent on fertilisers: Plants use microbes to help them take up 80 per cent of their nutrients. If the soil health isn't good and there aren't many microbes in it, they are dependent on fertilisers to grow.

“I realised that what was rainforest 100 years ago is now hard clay soil. The rain would just run off instead of drain into the soil. I was working at a garden centre, so tried gypsum, and it sat there for three years, and did noth-

ing. It pushes the sodium out of the soil so the particles can move, but you have to flood the gypsum with water to get it to do stuff, so I looked for something better," he said.

"Whenever there are stricter water restrictions, it's always the gardeners that are targeted, so we don't want our plants too dependent on water. Natural cycles can take hundreds of years to happen, but of course we want things to happen now, or at least within a year.

"When your plants' roots can grow deeper, your plants can grow better. This is contrary to what I had been taught about feeder roots being in the top 30 centimetres of soil. On a 30 degree day those roots are too hot.

"Plant roots can reach 15 feet down, even on plants that are only three or four feet high. The roots are taking the water and minerals deep into the soil. In the prairie lands in America, the short grass that is replacing the plants will have six-inch roots, and that's why the soil isn't alive anymore. One hundred years ago, vegetable crops like carrots had really long roots. This was before we had modern fertilisers.

"Those roots are so deep they tap into the ground water and bring it back up. When the ground water drops, the microbes in the soil die and the soil becomes hydrophobic.

Colin has found success with planting his trees into narrow, deeper holes (rather than the traditional horizontal holes), which encourages the roots to grow down deeper, and the plants grow better.

"I soaked them only when they started to wilt: five days at first, then seven days. Then after five weeks, I left them alone. Come next summer, I didn't need to water them at all. Once they had their roots down where it was cool and moist, they were fine in summer, and didn't need watering," he said.

Colin told us how plants can actually attract

the pollinators they require by producing metabolites. Genetically modified corn wasn't touched by bees as it creates no metabolites to attract them.

Colin explained that humans need up to 60 minerals for our bodies to function optimally, but our soil is often lacking in minerals, which means our food is, too. When you have the broad spectrum of minerals back in the soil, the plants can start to grow properly, and you get better food to eat.

Colin said that in as short a time as a 12- to 18-month period, you can change the soil you have by using the EarthLife products. Once the plants are established and the soil is improved, he gives the plants just one dose a year.

Colin hasn't used animal manure on his property for eight years. Being a Land for Wildlife property, he didn't like seeing the wallabies eating the chicken poo, and found it attracted wild dogs.

Interestingly, he tried mixing the EarthLife minerals into his quail's shell grit and noticed their behaviour changed and they stopped fighting. He thinks it's due to the levels of calcium and silica.

"The more chemical fertilisers you put on, the less the microbes are working, and the more the plant will rely on you to grow. I like to provide the soil with the minerals and microbes it needs, and let the plants work it out for themselves," he said.

I bought some of the different products on the night and am happy to say my cucumbers are handling the super-hot days much better than before. They don't wilt like they used to. Maria asked at our January meeting how members had gone using the products, and there was lots of good feedback.

***““When the soil is functioning properly it looks after itself.”***

***- Colin Johnson***

## January Meeting Recap

By Leah Johnston

We were all eager to get back to our first meeting of the year, with lots of questions for the knowledgeable Maria.

Janet has had lots of small fruit dropping from her young mandarin tree, but her older tree is fine.

Maria and Shelley said not to worry, it's just got too much fruit for a small tree to support so some falls off.

Jill wants to grow a small mandarin tree to grow in a pot. Shelley said growing a normal size tree in a pot will make it grow to dwarf size. Margaret suggested calling the Nerang Bunnings and ask them to order in one grafted onto dwarf rootstock.

Members have found the soil level in their pots drops significantly. Maria said that potting mix breaks down quickly, so use one third soil, one third potting mix and one third sand. Put broken pots or rocks over the hole in the pot so it doesn't fill with soil and stop the plant from draining. You don't want your plants to have wet roots, or they will drown and rot. You can tell this is happening when the leaves go brown and soft on the edges. A brown crunchy edge can mean the soil is too dry.

Roger has a pecan tree with brown leaves. Maria said growing flowers under a tree can disturb the roots. Maria said check for ring bark or borers, or mulch against the trunk, which can ringbark it. If the grass around it isn't dead, you have to wait and see what happens to it.

Belinda asked how to get rid of nut grass. Jill said to move house. Maria said you will be pulling it out for the rest of your life. Maria said at a previous property, she carefully applied herbicide with an eye dropper... before moving to get away from it.

Maria said you can take dead plants back to Bunnings and get a replacement or a refund.

Keep your labels and receipts.

Tim said the plants from Bunnings are fed up on fertilisers then you take them home and they are like junkies cut off from their supply.

Ian said to be mindful of where the plants are coming from. They may not be used to our hot, wet weather.

Shelley checks the roots and removes the plug of coir moss before replanting them.

Maria said they will sell you anything at any time. For example, the carrot seedlings – root vegetables shouldn't be planted from seedlings; they should be planted from seeds.

Jill asked about black spots on silver beet. Maria said you are just going to get it at this time of year: it's too humid. Maria said it's not the best time of year to grow them, so work out if it's worth it or not. Jill said most of them are doing well.

Ian recommended trying liquid silica.

Penny asked if there's a way to sweeten oranges. Maria said the sweetness is usually due to the variety they are. She said to check the soil and see if it's too acidic, and if it is: add lime, or try some gypsum or trace elements.

## January Meeting Speaker Recap

At our January meeting Michelle Benson, from Michelle's Native Plants, spoke about Loving Our Local Biodiversity.

Michelle said the bush tucker isn't as palatable as the introduced species we like to eat, but they do grow so easily in our area and shouldn't be overlooked.

Michelle has a beautiful way of appreciating the symbiotic relationship between our native flora and fauna, and doesn't even mind an ant biting her, as it's just doing its job!

"If I see a plant defoliated from a caterpillar, to me it's a sign of a really biodiverse environment. In my experience, the plant will always

recover,” she said.

Michelle said that 4.4 billion years ago, our Earth was uninhabitable, with toxic gases in the air. Millions of years of evolution has created all different species that work together so amazingly.

“It freaks me out that we know so little about our local plants. We’ve been here for over 200 years. They are part of our system, and are vital to all of the things that we like to see in terms of wildlife. The Gold Coast is still one of the most biodiverse rich environments, and we are at a time where there’s a lot of population growth, so we need to understand what we’ve got, and value it.

“It’s something we need to keep thinking about, how precious our Earth is, and how every little thing we do makes a difference,” she said.

Michelle thinks we have lawn grubs because there are too many lawns and not enough biodiversity. When we have biodiversity no one species can dominate and decimate another.

The Land For Wildlife program is doing great work where land owners of more than one hectare can register and have financial assistance for native plantings on their land.

“It’s so exciting what is out there in every imaginable form of insects. When I open up a seed pod, I find all kinds of insects in there eating the seeds. Such biodiversity,” she said.

Michelle said fireflies are endangered because they need dark areas so their glow can be seen by the females. John said they need rotting timber for their larvae to grow on, and people keep removing the rotting timber.

There are things we can all do to help enhance the biodiversity in our local areas. We can grow native plants to create habitats and food sources for our native wildlife. Two key endangered spe-

cies are the Southern pink underwing moth and the Richmond Birdwing butterfly. We can support these struggling populations by growing their host plants that their caterpillars feed on: the Carronia Multisepealea and the Richmond Birdwing Vine respectively.

“When growing your own food, you can inter-plant with local native species to help your own food grow. Natives may help by hosting insect predator wasps, jumping ants, assassin bugs, spiders, frogs, carpet snakes and insect-eating birds, which will eat the pests in your garden. You don’t want a mono crop of something: it makes it easy for pests to decimate it. Jumping ants are doing their job trying to keep the balance of nature. Yes, if you stand on them or hit them, they will bite you, but they will help you in the garden. However, if the wallabies and possums come in, you’ll have to net or cage your veggies to keep them safe,” she said.

Michelle recommended the book *Mangroves to Mountains* for learning more about what’s growing in our area (the Gold Coast Library has it).

You can find Michelle at the markets at Stockland or via her Facebook page, Michelle’s Native Plants. If there’s something native you’ve been looking for, or need a large quantity of something for a mass planting, she can often order things in if she doesn’t already have them in stock.

**“It’s something we need to keep thinking about, how precious our Earth is, and how every little thing we do makes a difference.”**

**- Michelle Benson**

## Welcome to Autumn!

By Diane Kelly

Well - we have certainly had a variety of weather during the past three months - cooler days, hot and humid days, dry spells, thunderstorms - and plenty of rain! Summer gardening is always a challenge as the weeds grow enthusiastically; the grasshoppers and slugs multiply; and the humidity is tiring - but now autumn is approaching.

The next three months are described by the Bureau of Meteorology as "transition months" - the weather now cools as the sun slowly moves northward over the equator and we approach the winter solstice. Other descriptions of the season by various authors include "a gentle time", "a time when it is a pleasure to do hard work outside", and "an ideal time to make compost".

But the most motivational piece I came across when reading about autumn is that "these are the months in which you make it or break it for spring. Now is an important time in the gardening calendar, so plan and plant now". And when you look at a planting guide for our area, it is exciting to see how many vegetables, flowers and herbs you can plant during the next three months.

### Month One:

**Vegetables:** This is a good month to plant out Asian cabbages or Asian salad greens. Asian cabbages include favourites such as bok choy, pak choy, wong bok and choy sum (also known as Chinese flowering cabbage). These are wonderful to either stir fry or add to your lunchtime salads but remember that the headed types are less heat-tolerant than open-hearted selections. They are also harder to keep free of pest problems. When picking single leaves from open-hearted Asian cabbages, remember to cut the leaves rather than tearing them because that tends to wrench the roots and make the plants unstable. Tearing off the leaves can also result in disease-prone leaf stalks.

Asian salad greens are also known as mizuna, mustard greens, kai tsoi, wasabi parsley and tatsoi - and more! These vegetables have a wide diversity of leaf shape and make attractive mixed salads - a good idea is to establish one of each type of plant so that you increase the variety of greens in your diet. Asian salad greens do tend to be affected by prolonged humidity or by being waterlogged by heavy rain. Pick the outermost leaves first, leaving the younger, central leaves to grow - they will provide a repeat harvest for up to three months.

French beans can start to be planted now, along with beetroot, carrots, cauliflower, celeriac (which you can eat cooked or raw), kale, leeks, rocket and silver beet.

All-year-round vegetables can continue to be planted - amaranth spinach (this can be eaten as a micro-green, or added to salads, stir-fries or other steamed vegetables), arrowroot (the small tubers can be eaten like potatoes and the larger ones can be turned into an easily-digestible flour), cassava, lettuce, radish, sweet potato, tomatoes - and, of course, capsicums.

I must admit capsicums have been the bane of my life to grow - so far my garden has not produced any fruit that I would really want to add to my salads. Capsicum plants should be planted into manure-enriched soil that drains well. Choose a warm, sheltered position because the plants tend to be brittle and are subject to damage in windy conditions. Capsicum plants need adequate levels of calcium if they are to avoid blossom end rot - and remember to not plant them where other related vegetables such as tomatoes, chillies, eggplants or potatoes have been grown.

Patience is required for growing capsicums - the fruit take 3-4 months to be ready to pick, with sweetness increasing with maturity. Regular harvesting (if you are lucky enough to have more than one fruit!) encourages further production. Root knot nematodes can be a problem if soil quality is poor or crops are not rotated. Deficiency of calcium or irregular watering can cause the fruit to develop soft rot at the base where the blossom ends. So a



bit of a challenge to grow, but a sweet, crisp capsicum is a wonderful addition to your tossed salad – maybe I'll keep trying!

**Flowers:** The traditional first month of autumn is March, and no March would be the same without planting some sweet peas on St Patrick's Day! So, well prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> which is planting day, select a sunny but sheltered spot. Add plenty of organic matter to your soil, and if you have selected a climbing variety, have a trellis prepared to a height of two metres or so. Alternatively you may wish to plant some semi-dwarf or dwarf varieties in pots or a window box. And a warning from a Gardening Australia episode - check the labels because many modern cultivars have been bred without fragrance - hard to imagine why! It's a good idea to soak the seeds overnight to encourage germination and then plant them 20cm apart, and 2cm deep. Remember that birds will enjoy eating the emerging seed as they germinate, so cover the bed with netting. This can be

removed after germination to allow the sweet peas to start growing up their trellis.

Other flowers to plant out now include calendula (they'll brighten your garden beautifully), cornflowers, pansies (remember these have shallow roots which means they can dry out quickly in dry spells, so keep the plants moist and well mulched), lobelia, violas and primula.

Leave winter and spring flowering shrubs alone at the moment as they will be flowering or initiating their flower buds now. Examples are poinsettia, snowflake, camellias, azaleas and gordonia (also known as the "fried egg plant"). The one thing you might like to do now is add a little potassium.

### Month Two:

Planning for your spring garden is still important this month - the earth should remain warm enough to germinate seeds and for seedlings to establish a healthy root system. At the same time, however, many weeds will be starting to seed so make sure your garden is kept tidy and weed-free. The end of summer is a time for removing any old vegetables or flowers and either digging them in or composting them. Watch out for any diseased plants - make sure they don't get buried in your garden soil. And another hint for this time of the year - if you are not intending to use a particular garden bed until the spring, give it an overcoat of mulch. This will restrict the weeds, encourage earthworms and condition the soil.

**Vegetables:** The planting guide that I work by has 52 vegetables (with a few herbs, melons and pineapples included for good measure) that I can grow this month.

Vegetables that you can commence growing now include artichokes (both globe and Jerusalem), asparagus, broccoli, broad beans, Brussels sprouts (yummy when homegrown and served with a dab of butter and seasoned with salt and pepper), cabbage, celery, endive, kohlrabi (slice and add young leaves to your coleslaws, and grate the raw stem for salads), onions, spinach - and peas!

Peas are one of the most delightful vegetables to grow in your vegetable patch – and sugar snap and snow peas in particular. Annette McFarlane, in her book *Organic Vegetable Gardening*, recommends three varieties of standard peas:

- “Greenfeast” – these are dwarf, heavy-bearing plants that grow to about 1m.
- “Telephone” – a climbing garden pea that grows to 2m and bears over a 3-5 week period (and everyone loves the long pods and giant seeds - **pictured**).
- “Massey Gem” is a dwarf variety which is prized for its early production.

Peas like a fertile, but not over-rich, soil. Ensure the soil does not contain excess nitrogen as this will produce vegetative growth at the expense of flowers and pods. Don't grow peas in a bed that has previously grown summer beans, as pest and disease problems may be transferred. Ensure the soil is well drained, and you can add comfrey as either a mulch or prepared as a liquid fertilizer to the plants to supply additional nutritional elements. Plant pea seeds into moist soil, but then do not water the area until germination occurs. As the plants grow, tip prune them to encourage branching and to increase production. Keep the plants mulched - pea plants come out very easily when the area is weeded, so keep the soil clean. And a hint from a little book I have about gardening on the Gold Coast “Bear in mind that peas actively dislike proximity to your onions, garlic and shallots”.

**Flowers:** The flowers for this month are actually bulbs. Bulbs are described as “extremely adaptable, quite hardy and beautiful in wide or narrow beds, pots, tubs, under bushes and around the base of trees. They will grow in a wide variety of soils”. So... many good reasons to put in some in this year.

I was amused to read a summary of how landscapers view growing bulbs - they “agree to disagree”. But the consensus seems to be that bulbs in our climate should be treated as annuals - in other words, put the plants in; grow them; and then accept that they die. Don't try to dig them up, refrigerate them, and

then plant them the following year as one would do in southern areas.

Here are some of the bulbs you can grow locally: Agapanthus, blood lily, canna lily, clivea, crinum, daylilies, hippeastrum, ifafa lily, Jacobs lily, pampas lily, society garlic (these humble plants make a delicate display), spider lily and storm lily. And, although possibly a bit harder to source, there are native bulbous plants that are worth trying: Brisbane lily, Garland lily and River lily.

**And as Month Two ends, here are a couple of extra hints:**

Gather up anything in your vegetable patch that will be spoiled by the winter cold. Pick green tomatoes to ripen on newspaper indoors or to make into green tomato pickle. Collect any pumpkins still around to slice and stir fry, or to hang by their vines in the garage to keep ripening for a few more weeks. Dig up tomato and capsicum bushes with as much soil as you can and have a go at potting them for a continuing crop.

Scatter radish seeds for a quick crop to help protect other plants. These will go to seed in spring and can be removed easily, leaving your garden relatively weed-free and deeply dug, and having being mulched by the extra crop.

Clean up around anything that attracts fruit fly – clear away any old fruit wisely, and don't



put them in nice, warm, slowly decomposing compost heaps – because the fruit fly will enjoy over-wintering in their cosy new home!

### Month Three:

**Vegetables:** If you have been busy elsewhere than your vegetable patch over the past two months, don't worry – there are still things you can plant, but just don't expect that the results will be the same.

Meanwhile, ensure that you have your tripods or trellises ready for your beans and peas that should be growing well by now.

There are only two vegetables listed in my planting guide that actually start being grown in month three of our autumn season – swedes and parsnips. Whilst you can make a beef and swede casserole, or bake diced swedes and potatoes with fennel and cumin seeds and lemon zest (actually that doesn't sound too bad!) it is parsnips that are one of my favorite vegetables. Many is the time I have mashed parsnips and carrots together as part of a meal, but roast parsnips are even better! It was interesting to read that carrots, celery, parsley and parsnips are all related, and so we should avoid planting crops of these in rotation. Also, as long as your soil is well drained, parsnips keep better when left in the soil than if harvested.

Month Three will be your last chance to plant broad beans (also known as "fava beans") – but remember – people either love them or hate them! They have an unusual, faintly nutty flavor and can be eaten as regular beans – pods and all. When more mature, the fresh beans can be added to salads, or you can add them to risotto or pasta dishes, or turn them into pesto. Alternatively you can dry them and add them into a lamb casserole; turn them



in a dip; or add them to soups.

Broad beans do not like too much wet weather, and they do like fertile soil to which well-rotted organic matter has been added – more so than other types of beans. Too much nitrogen or rich manure will result in plants that are subject to fungal disease, and that will produce few flowers and therefore fewer beans. It is also important to support broad bean plants as they grow otherwise they will collapse under the weight of their harvest. So just add four stakes at the corner of each double row of plants and link them with twine. You can also hill the plants for extra support.

Once the plants start to form pods you can pinch out the tip growth to hasten development. Don't worry if the first flowers fail to set fruit – it is not unusual.

Other than growing swedes, parsnips and broad beans, just continue with the vegetables that were suited to Month Two and those that you can grow all year round. But don't forget to care for any potatoes you may have planted – add some compost to the potato patch; and keep the plants hilled and mulched.

**Flowers:** The flowers from last month can still be planted, but be quick. Pop in your bulbs, calendulas, cornflowers, lobelias and sweet peas – and how about trying some poppies and some marigolds for orange colour.

There are at least 50 different varieties of roses that can be grown in our locality – and they will thrive as long as they are given the right treatment. Let's start with a poem from my GC gardening book:

*The trick with roses, experts say,  
Is that you start to plant in May.  
The reason is not so deep,  
It is because they've gone to sleep*

Roses appreciate a deep, rich and well-drained soil. If your soil is acidic, add lime well before planting, and if your soil is clay,

dig deep, wide and add plenty of organic matter. Roses love blood & bone and well-rotted manure. And then add liquid fertilizing, top-dressing and mulching to your maintenance calendar.

Rose pruning can begin now and can continue until the end of July. Here are some guidelines:

Remove dead wood, old wood, weak wood, branches crowding each other, and then shorten the remainder by one third. Make clean, slanting cuts. It's as simple as that!

And a reminder – nematodes are the rose's greatest worry here, so be sure to plant nasturtiums under the bushes.

And to finish off month three, another reminder – it is our responsibility to grow our area's native vegetation where possible. Most Australian natives will not handle much fertilizer or cultivation, and our coastal varieties prefer a light soil and good mulch. Water well when transplanting with a weak liquid fertilizer. Container-grown natives can be planted throughout the year, but the next three months are considered ideal, so let's plan for the future.

Plants to consider: banksia; boronia, Illawarra flame tree (or flame bottle tree), bottlebrush, lilly pilly, grevillea, hakea (beautiful!), tea tree, melaleuca, stenocarpus (it's also known as the Queensland fire wheel), coastal rosemary and native wisteria (a beautiful mauve display).

Let's encourage birds like the crimson rosella to enjoy native plants such as "Grevillea Moonlight".

So as the cooler months of "Autumn" arrive and depart, let's enjoy the relaxation and peace they offer as we prepare for the chilly months of winter. I think Nathaniel Hawthorne (American author, 1800's) has some wisdom for us all:

***"...I cannot endure to waste anything so precious as autumnal sunshine by staying in the house. So I have spent almost all the daylight hours in the open air."***

### **A Wonderful Way to help our Community** By Diane Kelly

Back in August last year I had an email from Club member Bill Smart that certainly caught my attention.

**Bill wrote: "Times are tough for a lot of people so I have started a small Community Garden at the Ecovillage. The intention is to grow produce specifically for OzHarvest that provides meals for the homeless and needy."**

OzHarvest was founded in 2004 by Ronni Kahn. Ms Kahn is South African by birth, but she lived on a kibbutz in Israel for many years prior to emigrating to Australia in 1998. Becoming aware of the amount of food that is wasted in this country, she began to work with the restaurant and catering industries in Sydney to form a non-denominational charity that rescues excess food that would otherwise be discarded and distributes it to charities supporting the vulnerable around Australia.

Ms Kahn's impact spread internationally and in 2014 she attended a Sustainable Innovation forum in Lima, Peru. The event served to remind delegates of the level that food waste contributes to dangerous greenhouse gases which affect climate change, and the amount of resources squandered when food is wasted. Ms Kahn's comment was that "If food waste was a country, it would be the third biggest emitter of carbon and methane gas after the US and China".

OzHarvest has now progressed to be the leading food rescue organisation in Australia. Each week OzHarvest collects over 100 tonnes of quality surplus food from more than 3,000 food donors including supermarkets, restaurants, cafes, hotels, airports and other food outlets and then delivers them directly to more than 1,000 charities who help feed vulnerable Australians. In addition, OzHarvest runs educational programs that enhance life skills and improve health and nutrition and teach sustainable living.



The idea for the new gardens was that space-efficient and quick-growing vegetables would be planted – lettuce; Asian greens; cucumbers; zucchinis – and then progressing on to other crops such as capsicums, chillies, celery, beetroot and various herbs. Growing seedlings and sharing the tasks were the projects – seed trays could be prepared on site to be transplanted, or people were welcome to bring along seedlings ready to be added to the raised beds.

In addition to those services provided to our community, The OzHarvest Market was opened in Kensington NSW in 2018. This is Australia's first "rescued food supermarket" and its philosophy was that people are welcome to "take what you need; or give what you can". Thus, rescued food was made available to all. The Market has now relocated to Waterloo in Sydney, but the concept remains the same.

So... returning now to the Currumbin Valley community garden. When I visited the location in mid- September last year, Bill had just commenced taking care of the area which is across the road from his home. There were 10 raised garden beds; a small shade house and a shed; and space for a lot of potted plants. At the time Bill was hoping that a few people might come and help him develop the project – after the initial setup, the community aspect would be emphasized with a plan for the participants to swap ideas and to learn from each other. Classes could be planned to cover such topics as seed raising; compost; mulching; seed saving; taking cuttings and what soil suits which plants. On a more regular basis, the concept that the Brisbane Organic Growers apply could be shared here – an "older" gardener would be available to help beginner gardeners learn about the pleasures of organic gardening.

To find out more about OzHarvest and the ways you can get involved by visiting: [www.ozharvest.org](http://www.ozharvest.org). I particularly liked the invitation on their website that we "**Join us in giving hope to those doing it tough**" and contribute in some way.

### **Australia Day, January 2021:**

There's no more appropriate date for learning about how our community is helping those in need - the Australian concept of "giving a mate a hand when he needs it". So, I contacted Bill and asked if he would be available to provide an update on how the project is going, and his input on what still needs to be done - and indeed how we as Club members might be able to help.

Over the past few months, and as with all gardens, this one has grown some plants very successfully and others that have been put into the "not so successful basket". The most productive vegetables have been the Asian greens, lettuce and rocket, and the best herbs have been Thai basil and parsley (both the Italian and curly leafed varieties). The Asian greens that Bill grew have been Bok Choy and Pak Choy – both are types of Chinese cabbages, with the green Pak Choy producing more successfully than the Canton variety. And, as a sweet addition to the food

collection, just one of Bill's plants produced 12 red dragon fruits.

The garden had less success with carrots, snake beans, zucchinis and eggplants – the flowers and fruit of the latter two both rotted and the wet weather we have been experiencing recently caused mildew problems. Black fly was the problem with the snake beans.

The vegetable that has been the most productive has been the lettuce – Bill grows the Parris Island Cos variety very successfully. Cos lettuce tend to have strong leaves and take up less space to grow in the garden (in difference to, say, oak leaf or iceberg varieties) and they pack very well for delivery to Oz Harvest. Bill and the team of volunteers remove the plants from the garden with the roots intact and wash off the dirt. The lettuce are put into ice cream containers with some water in the bottom to stop them wilting and then are packed into crates to take them to the Oz Harvest pick-up point on Mondays. The previous week before my visit the Eco Village as a whole contributed 31 kgs of fresh vegetables, herbs and fruit, and 44 kgs of non-perishable food, making a total of 75kgs of generosity that will provide over 250 meals!

The keys to steady contributions are fast-growing vegetables and regular planting of seeds and then the transferring of seedlings to the gardens. To keep up production, Bill will be establishing three more garden beds – soil will be brought in and then its quality improved. Compost will be added to it, and then rock minerals and Blood & Bone. The beds will then be topped with a layer of sugar cane mulch.

So what can we do to help? Firstly, and this is the easy part, we are welcome to contribute non-perishable food to Oz Harvest. Tins, packets or jars of beetroot, sweet corn,

tomatoes, pasta, sauces etc can be either taken to the Eco Village each Monday morning for the Oz Harvest collection, or brought along to our Club meetings and be given to either Bill (who helps out at our seed table) or the front desk.

Another thing we can do is plant seeds and grow them to the small seedling stage. Again, they can be taken to Club meetings, or Bill will collect them – he is supplying seeds, trays and growing containers for volunteers.

And, if you feel like giving Bill and the other volunteers a helping hand, there is always plenty to do on site. Sowing seeds, pricking out, getting new beds established, weeding (and the nut grass is proving a challenge this year) and generally helping out in the garden would be much appreciated.

Just to end off the story of a wonderful project for a very worthwhile cause, here's a quip from Bill as he talked about the challenges of setting up and working with the garden:

"One ingredient I always need for my gardening – help from my mate Percy – and if you've not met Percy yet, his full name is Perseverance."

PS. To contact Bill, his mobile number is 0411 428 465.



## EdibleScapes 2021

By Jorge Cantellano

### Our COVID-19 response and achievements

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, EdibleScapes harvested 35 times and delivered approximately 5200 litres (1500 kilograms) of fresh produce to Nerang Food Bank. This we grew in 400m<sup>2</sup> of garden beds, achieving productivity of about 4kg per m<sup>2</sup> of garden for the year.

This was only possible by employing biointensive growing methods, onsite production of organic solid and liquid biofertilisers, and the contribution of our volunteers; casual volunteers to gardening and composting work in the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic and 24 participants in the Edible Garden Promoter program since July 2020.

The original concept of the public Edible Landscape Garden or 'EdibleScapes Garden' at Country Paradise Parklands was to grow fruits trees and accompanying perennial edible plants and herbs inspired by forest gardens seen in permaculture. We are not a permaculture model, rather a demonstrative and experiential learning site in an organically grown food garden that is open to the public.



Seedling propagation  
EGP August 2020

Fruit trees that we planted in 2018-19 are now flourishing and fruiting. We will plant additional trees in 2021, to complete the last phase of design. Nevertheless, the perennial permaculture plants are replaced for seasonal vegetables to supply food relief services and demonstrate the possibilities of a local edible garden.

### Pilot volunteer training program

The Edible Garden Promoter (EGP) program is part of our own course of learning for establishing home gardens in Gold Coast. One big takeaway from the 2020 intake is that participants need resources to be able to begin their home garden - materials like growing soil substrate, biofertilisers and so on.

This year, to enhance the experience for participants, the program will be associated with our social enterprise Ediblescapes\_SE, in order to make growing resources available to them.

### Fertilisers for home growers

Ediblescapes is the social enterprise that will enable Ediblescapes Inc. to self-fund our programs and create positive social impact for the Gold Coast community by influencing the transition towards ecological and equitable urban food systems.

To help home growers, Ediblescapes\_SE has developed a solid biofertiliser, BIOLSOL, in a concentrated form for dilution into a dual-use liquid foliar spray and soluble soil fertiliser,

BIOL. Just 3 per cent of concentrated BIOLSOL will be sufficient to make a spray for a home garden containing vegetables and fruit trees.

Another solid form of BIOLSOL will be a bokashi-style product designed for use with transplanted seedlings and periodical soil fertilisation.

BIOLSOL leads to superior plant growth. contains a complex mix of essential micro-nutrients and other beneficial nutrients that stimulate a range of positive effects in plants resulting in high, healthy crop yields. It increases plants' resistance to in-

*Peanut Butter Tree planted by Diane Kelly in 2019 celebrating International Women's Week.*



We ask the organic growing community to support us in our bold objective – we want to establish a mutually beneficial relationship with you!

**Become an Ediblescapes\_SE Member and become a shareholder in the social enterprise.**

As a member you will receive credit to exchange for BIOLSOL for your own use, as well as access to learning materials from our Edible Garden Promoter program.

sects and diseases and makes them more tolerant to stressors like heat.

Considering external environmental impacts of our product's distribution, we have chosen to package BIOLSOL in home compostable packaging and in its concentrated form for more economical transportation.

Sign up here [https://www.facebook.com/Ediblescapes\\_SE-104256128338244/](https://www.facebook.com/Ediblescapes_SE-104256128338244/)

To enroll in the Edible Garden Promoters program, apply here:

[https://www.facebook.com/job\\_opening/675360593384465](https://www.facebook.com/job_opening/675360593384465)

### **Our 2021 aspirations and how you can help**

Our objective in 2021 is to increase the garden area to 600m<sup>2</sup>, double the productivity of the beds and harvest enough produce to directly benefit 30 people per week.



***"Delicious autumn!  
My very soul is wedded  
to it, and if I were a bird  
I would fly about the  
earth seeking the  
successive autumns."***

***- George Eliot  
(English novelist)***



**2020 covid19 respond**

Learning by doing-urban agroecology-social solidarity economy-food security



## Build Resilience in your Own Backyard

By Diane Kelly

One way to improve the health of your backyard is to plant native trees and grasses - they support your local ecosystems, control weeds, and make your garden more resistant to climate change. So here are some details of a beautiful native tree and several native grasses that will do well in our area - and a little bird that will enjoy them.



### Introducing the Golden Penda:

You might recently have noticed some trees in your neighborhood that are flowering in a blaze of colour and, if so, they may well be a golden penda. This is an Australian native tree that is related to eucalypts and bottle-brushes and they will attract birds, bees and butterflies to your garden when they are in flower. We have a tree of about 3 metres in height in our backyard, and to watch the bees flit from one bloom to another is wonderful.

Golden pendas can grow to 7 metres in height but they can also be pruned to size or restricted by growing them in a large container. (There is also a smaller variety called "Little Penda" that only reaches 2-4 metres.)

**On a note of interest:** The golden penda tree was selected as the theme plant for Expo 88. Cuttings of the tree, which is native to north Queensland, were taken from a garden in Brisbane and planted when in flower in Brisbane to create a 'Sea of Gold'. In late autumn, the tree can still be seen in flower in gardens and lining streets across Brisbane. The tree is also the native floral emblem of Cairns.

### Introducing the Superb Fairy Wren:

This little bird is a native of the Gold Coast and as you can see - he enjoys native grasses! So here are some grasses that we can plant for him (with information from Bush Heritage Australia).



### King Bluegrass:

Native bluegrass needs little or no fertilizer and has no known major pests or diseases. It establishes easily and grows over the warmer months - it reaches up to 80cm in height and is best planted in late winter to early summer. Its leaves range in colour from green to bluish-purple, while its seed heads have a silky, hair-like appearance. It works well as a border plant and is a great food source for small native mammals and birds.

### Swamp Foxtail:

An excellent grass for attracting native birds, this is a low maintenance plant that is suitable for a wide range of soils.

Its typical size is 45cm x 45cm and it is a beautiful grass with long leaves and feathery plumes. It works well as an accent plant and suits well anywhere you want to add a burst of colour and foliage to your garden.

### Blue Tussock:

This is a very hardy grass that grows well in loam or sandy soils. Again, it is excellent for native birds, insects and lizards. Named for its bluish-green foliage, this native grass grows over the cooler months and then flow-

ers in summer. It is effective in controlling erosion and is an ideal accent plant in your garden.

### **Kangaroo Grass:**

This grass enjoys a range of soils and grows best in full sun or partial shade. It flowers in late spring/early summer and has a typical size of 50cm (W) and 1.5m (H). This is a tufted native grass that changes colour from green to reddish-purple in autumn/winter. It is an ideal plant for understorey vegetation, ornamental gardens and informal lawns.

So, following on from our January guest speaker, let's have a think about what we can plant in our gardens to make our native birds, insects and animals welcome. They are easy to grow and give their own reward.



**Swamp foxtail grass and tussock grass will make wonderful additions to your native garden.**



## **Something Sweet to Grow in Autumn** By Diane Kelly

A very special thing you can do during the next three months is plant strawberries – as they conjure up images of peaceful days and picnic hampers – and are generally yummy!

Strawberries are best grown in a sunny, well-drained soil, especially if the site is elevated or made into a mound with gently sloping sides.

Any soil is suitable, but the optimum is a sandy, loamy soil with plenty of organic matter added. Dig lots of animal manure into the soil to improve the texture and provide some food. This will enhance berry growth, but not to the point where the fruit is watery and tasteless.

Once you have prepared the bed (making sure the site is well drained), plant the strawberries in rows about 70cm apart. Dig in the plants at a 40cm interval, leaving plenty of room for growth. Keep an eye out for weeds, as these can be a considerable nuisance for strawberry plants. Add manure into the soil with a small dash of sulphate of potash (15g per sq m) to help the flowers develop.

When planting in rows, make sure that the base of the strawberry crown is just at soil level. If it is too high, the roots will be exposed and dry out; if too low in the ground, unwanted weak growth can occur. As the plants grow, water them regularly.

As the berries develop, cut off the runners, as they simply waste the plant's energy. The runners can be used as cuttings for new plants. As the berries ripen and become weighed down so they touch the soil, protect them from mud splashes by laying straw under them (hence, maybe, the name "strawberries"?)

Be aware that slugs, snails and birds find strawberries particularly attractive. (Be sure to get in first!)

## FRUIT TREES

### FEBRUARY

**Custard Apples:** Peak water needs. Apply organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash, 1 kg for mature trees and ½ kg for young trees.

**Figs:** Net trees to protect figs from birds. Pick fruit every two days. Fertilise with 1 kg organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash.

**Low shill stone fruit:** Moderate water needs.

**Lychee:** Peak water needs. Mulch trees. This is a good time to “skirt” trees (skirt-trim all growth to 500mm above ground). Prune so 20% light can be seen through trees. If Erinose mite is a problem, spray with wettable sulphur every 10 to 14 days from pin head size new growth to fully open, and harden off.

**Mango:** Apply organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash. Keep up water. Prune trees after harvest. **Pruning:** If it is a very large tree that needs to be pruned to a manageable size, the correct way is to cut back 1/3 of branches each year for three years. In the first year remove one of the largest branches, the following year remove another branch, and so on until the tree is of an acceptable shape and size. In this way you will have some fruit each year while at the same time reducing the size of the tree. Spray with copper based spray or leaf microbes for anthracnose every fortnight.

**Passion-fruit:** Keep up the water.

**Pawpaw:** Plant pawpaws in threes (thin out to strongest). Plant out seedlings as the soil is still warm and by Autumn they will be stabilised, and then be ready to get an early start for Spring. De-bud your first year trees (keep one flower to try the fruit – if you must!) Keep one male to eight female trees. Pawpaws are heavy feeders. Spray copper based spray or leaf microbes to prevent black spot.

**Persimmon:** Make sure trees are fully netted. Harvest time for early varieties.

**Strawberries:** Prepares sites for runners to

be planted out at the end of the month. Keep well-watered to form new runners.

**Bananas:** Fertilise with organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash – 1 kg per stool. Keep up water; bag fruit; and cut off bells.

**Citrus:** Fruit thinning should be done this month. Leave one fruit every 150mm. Fertilise tree with organic fertiliser containing sulphate of potash, 1 kg for large trees and ½ kg for smaller trees. Keep up sprays of pest oil for leaf miner. Keep up the water.

### MARCH

**Custard Apples:** Fertilize trees – 20 gms of organic fertiliser per sq m to drip line. Harvest every 3 to 7 days. If mealy bug is a problem spray individual fruit with pest oil or wipe on metho and water (30% metho + 70% water).

**Figs:** Close to end of season.

**Lychee:** Less watering is required, but don't let the trees dry out. If Erinose mite appears, spray every 10 to 14 days with wettable sulphur from pinhead size new growth to fully open and hardened off.

**Low Chill Stone Fruit:** Water needs to taper off now as trees begin to defoliate.

**Mango:** If any anthracnose fungus is visible, spray with a copper based spray every 2 weeks, or with 25 mls leaf microbes and 5 grams wettable sulphur per 1 litre of water.

**Passionfruit:** The water can be tapered off. Harvest fallen fruit under vines every 3-4 days.

**Pawpaw:** Plant out new trees. Apply boron now. 1 teaspoon per mature tree. Spray leaf microbes (25 ml leaf microbes per 1 litre of water) if black spot is seen.

**Persimmon:** Main harvest time. Decline water needs. Apply a little super fine lime and gypsum – 50 gms per sq metre of each.

**Strawberries:** Plant out new runners. If you want to leave last year's plants, prune only.

**Bananas:** Give stools a high organic potassium fertilizer – 200 grams per stool (any organic fertilizer that has added sulphate of potash).

**Citrus:** If any fungal problems arise, spray with pest oil and leaf microbes. Add the pest oil + 15 ml per litre of the leaf microbes. This will also control the citrus leaf miner and scale.

**Pruning Citrus:** Citrus trees need little pruning. If over-crowded, thin out after fruiting. Don't thin oranges or grapefruit severely but mandarins can be shortened back to the second or third shoot down the branch. Lemon trees are taller and less compact so keep them to a size easier to handle. Old trees can be cut severely but will take a year or two to recover and bear.

## APRIL

**Custard Apples:** Peak harvest period. Harvest every 3 to 7 days. Watering can be tapered off. If you have not done your spraying for mealy bug, do it now. Spray individual fruit with pest oil or wipe on metho and water (30% metho & 70% water).

**Figs:** Taper off the water.

**Lychee:** Don't let trees dry out. Check for Erinoze mite. Spray with wettable sulphur.

**Low Chill Stone Fruit:** Fertilise trees with a high organic potassium fertilizer, 50 gms per sq meter to the drip line of trees. Prune trees now – 1/3 to 1/4 of the tips can be taken off. Any inward or downward wood can be pruned.

**Mango:** Apply gypsum if soil pH is 6 or more. If below 6 pH, apply lime. 50 gms per sq meter of either. Continue with copper based spray for anthracnose or with 25 mls leaf microbes and 5 gms wettable sulphur per 1 litre of water.

**Passion-fruit:** Water can be tapered off. Harvest fallen fruit every 3-4 days.

**Pawpaw:** If you have not applied boron,

apply now. 1 teaspoon per mature tree. 40% of annual fertiliser can be applied now to mature trees (20 grams per sq meter of a high organic potassium fertiliser).

**Persimmon:** Main harvest time. Declining water needs. Apply a little super-fine lime and gypsum, 20 gm of each per sq m.

**Strawberries:** Plants should be coming away well. A little organic potassium fertiliser can be applied now. Use fish emulsion or kelp spray regularly over plants to keep in good health. Add 20 mls molasses per litre of water + 10 mls leaf microbes.

**Bananas:** De-sucker plants, cutting at ground level. Cut out centre with a sharp downward motion around the circumference to the centre, forming a well. If they do not die, use 20mls of kero to the bottom of this well.

**Citrus:** If any scale and fungal problems still exist a further spray with pest oil and leaf microbes will be needed. Add the pest oil + 15 ml per litre of the leaf microbes. Early varieties can be picked this month.

## VEGETABLES

### FEBRUARY:

Asian Greens, Beans (French, Snake), Beetroot, Broccoli, Cabbage, Capsicum, Carrot, Cauliflower, Chilli, Choko, Kale, Leeks, lettuce, Marrow, Mustard Greens, Onions, Parsnip, Pumpkin, Radish, Rhubarb, Shallots, Silverbeet, Sunflower, Sweet Potato, Tomato.

### MARCH:

Asian Greens, Beans (French), Beetroot, Broccoli, Cabbage, Capsicum, Carrot, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Celery, Chilli, Endive, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Mustard Greens, Onions, Parsnip, Peas, Potato, Radish, Shallots, Silverbeet, Snow Peas, Sweet Potato, Tomato.

### APRIL:

Asian Greens, Beans (French), Beetroot, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Celery, Endive, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi,

Leek, Lettuce, Mustard Greens, Onion, Parsnip, Peas, Potato, Radish, Shallots, Silverbeet, Snow Peas, Spinach, Sweet Potato, Tomato, Turnip.

## HERBS

### FEBRUARY

**Annual:** Amaranth, Basil, Dill, Herb Robert, Misome, Mizuna, Nasturtium, Italian parsley Rocket, Giant Red Mustard, Salad Mallow.

**Perennials & Bi-Annals:** Catnip, Ceylon Spinach, Chicory, Chilli, Chives, Comfrey, Perennial Coriander, Echinacea, Fennel, Hyssop, Lavender, Lemon Balm, Licorice, Lovage, Marjoram, Mint, Mushroom Plant, Oregano, Parsley, Rosemary, Sage, Salad Burnet, Stevia, French Tarragon, Winter Tarragon, Thyme, Upland Cress, Watercress, Winter Savoury.

### MARCH

**Annual:** Borage, Calendula, Chamomile, Chervil, Coriander, Dill, Garlic, Italian parsley, Misome, Mizuna, Nasturtium, Rocket.

**Perennials & Bi-Annals:** Catnip, Chives, Perennial Coriander, Fennel, Hyssop, Lavender, Lemon Balm, Marjoram, Mint, Mushroom Plant, Oregano, Parsley, Rosemary, Sage, Salad Burnet, Winter Tarragon, Thyme, Upland Cress, Winter Savoury.

### APRIL

**Annual:** Borage, Calendula, Chamomile, Chervil, Coriander, Dill, Garlic, Italian parsley, Misome, Mizuna, Nasturtium, Rocket.

**Perennials & Bi-Annals:** Catnip, Chives, Perennial Coriander, Fennel, Hyssop, Lavender, Lemon Balm, Marjoram, Mint, Mushroom Plant, Oregano, Parsley, Rosemary, Sage, Salad Burnet, Winter Tarragon, Thyme, Upland Cress, Winter Savoury.

**Source:** Queensland Planting Guide, BOGI

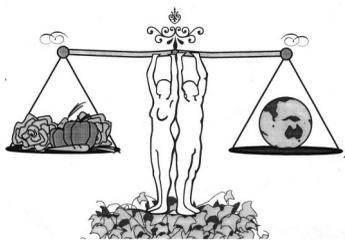
***"I have never read of any Roman supper that seemed to me equal to a dinner of my own vegetables; where everything on the table is the product of my own labour. It is strange what a taste you suddenly have for things you never liked before!"***

***- Charles Warner  
(American novelist and  
friend of Mark Twain)***

***"Autumn has always been my favourite season. The time when everything bursts with its last beauty, as if nature had been saving up all year for the grand finale."***

***- Lauren Destefano***

*GOLD COAST ORGANIC  
GROWERS Inc.*



## **NEWSLETTER**



### **Meetings held:**

4th Thursday of the Month  
Doors open at 7pm, meetings  
start at 7.30pm and run  
until approximately 9.30pm

### **Elanora Community Centre:**

26 Galleon Way,  
Elanora, Gold Coast

### **Next meeting:**

**Thursday February 25, 2021**